



Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-50 (canceled).

51 (new): A method of diagnosing lung damage in a mammal, wherein the mammal is asymptomatic to lung damage or wherein the clinical diagnosis of lung damage in the mammal cannot otherwise be confirmed without the aid of one or more invasive procedures, said method comprising screening for an increase in the levels of SP-B in a body fluid of said mammal relative to a normal reference level.

52 (new): The method of claim 51, wherein said mammal is asymptomatic to lung damage.

53 (new): The method of claim 51, wherein the clinical diagnosis of lung damage in the mammal cannot otherwise be confirmed without the aid of one or more invasive procedures.

54 (new): The method of claim 51, wherein said body fluid is blood.

55 (new): The method of claim 52, wherein said body fluid is blood.

56 (new): The method of claim 53, wherein said body fluid is blood.

57 (new): A method of diagnosing alveolo-capillary membrane damage in a mammal, wherein the mammal is asymptomatic to alveolo-capillary membrane damage or wherein the clinical diagnosis of alveolo-capillary membrane damage in the mammal cannot otherwise be confirmed without the aid of one or more invasive procedures, said method comprising

screening for an increase in the levels of SP-B in a body fluid of said mammal relative to a normal reference level.

58 (new): The method of claim 57, wherein said mammal is asymptomatic to alveolo-capillary membrane damage.

59 (new): The method of claim 57, wherein the clinical diagnosis of alveolo-capillary membrane damage in the mammal cannot otherwise be confirmed without the aid of one or more invasive procedures.

60 (new): The method of claim 57, wherein said body fluid is blood.

61 (new): The method of claim 58, wherein said body fluid is blood.

62 (new): The method of claim 59, wherein said body fluid is blood.

63 (new): The method of claim 51, wherein the mammal is a human.

64 (new): The method of claim 57, wherein the mammal is a human.